

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ISLAMA 03855 01 OF 02 110728 Z

12

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 IO-12 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

USIA-12 SR-02 ORM-03 DPW-01 RSR-01 /123 W

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R 110609 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9175

INFO AMEMBASSY BERN

AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMCONSUL KARACHI

AMCONSUL LAHORE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

USMISSION GENEVA

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 ISLAMABAD 3855

E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: SREF, PFOR, PK, BG

SUBJECT: DETENTION OF BENGALLEES IN PAKISTAN

REF: ISLAMABAD 3712

SUMMARY: ONLY CLASS I (I. E., HIGHEST LEVEL) FORMER
BENGALLEE CIVIL SERVANTS WERE DETAINED BY GOP NIGHT
MAY 5-6. TOTAL OF ABOUT 250 PICKED UP IN ISLAMABAD
PLUS 150 IN KARACHI. FAMILIES WERE NOT DETAINED AS
ORIGINALLY REPORTED AND, AT LEAST IN ISLAMABAD, THEIR
MOVEMENTS REMAIN UNRESTRICTED. HIGHEST RANKING DE-
TAINEES HELD IN RELATIVELY COMFORTABLE QUARTERS AT
AIR FORCE CAMP. GOP DOES NOT INTEND CUT OFF THEIR
ALLOWANCES. GOP OFFICIALS ASSERT THEY HAVE
BEEN TAKEN INTO CUSTODY IN INSURE THEIR SAFETY IN
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PAGE 02 ISLAMA 03855 01 OF 02 110728 Z

EVENT BANGLADESH WAR CRIMES TRIALS, ALTHOUGH THEY CONCEDE THAT DETENTION COULD ALSO RELATE TO POSSIBLE RETALIATORY GOP TRIALS. ICRC AND SWISS DENY THAT GOI OR BDG HAS YET ASKED THEM TO INVESTIGATE WELFARE OF DETAINEES. END SUMMARY.

1. THIS MESSAGE PROVIDES FURTHER DETAILS REGARDING DETENTION BY GOP OF FORMER BENGALIEE CIVIL SERVANTS ON NIGHT OF MAY 5-6.

2. SENIOR GOP OFFICIALS (MFA ADDITIONAL SECRETARY ALTAF SHAIKH AND ADDITIONAL CABINET SECRETARY NAWAZ) HAVE TOLD US THAT ONLY FORMER CLASS I (I. E., HIGHEST LEVEL) CIVIL SERVANTS WERE PICKED UP MAY 5-6 AND THAT GOP HAS NO PRESENT INTENTION OF DETAINING FORMER CLASS II, III OR IV CIVIL SERVANTS. TOTAL OF ABOUT 250 BENGALIEES WERE PICKED UP IN ISLAMABAD AREA PLUS ABOUT 150 IN KARACHI AREA. ACCORDING GOP OFFICIALS, THIRTEEN HIGHEST- RANKING DETAINEES FROM ISLAMABAD, INCLUDING FORMER MFA DIRGEN TABARAK HUSSAIN AND FORMER AGRICULTURE SECY AHSAN, HAVE BEEN TAKEN TO PAF CAMP AT WARSACK, FEW MILES NORTHWEST OF PESHAWAR, WHERE THEY ARE HOUSED IN OFFICERS QUARTERS. LOWER RANKING CLASS I OFFICERS FROM ISLAMABAD, INCLUDING FORMER MFA DIRECTORS MOHSIN AND BARI, HAVE BEEN SENT TO WAPDA CANAL COLONY AT QADIRABAD, NEAR GUJRANWALA. THOSE IN KARACHI AREA ARE BEING DETAINED AT A GOVERNMENT FACILITY IN LANDHI, IN CITY'S OUTSKIRTS (WHICH CONGEN KARACHI IDENTIFIES AS BORSTAL JUVENILE DETENTION CENTER.)

3. ACCORDING TO SHAIKH, FAMILIES OF DETAINEES WERE NOT SEIZED WITH THEM ON MAY 5-6 AS WAS ORIGINALLY REPORTED. INSTEAD, FAMILIES WERE GIVEN OPTION OF ACCOMPANYING PRINCIPALS OR OF REMAINING IN PRESENT QUARTERS. THIS WAS CONFIRMED BY WIFE OF ONE OF DETAINEES, MRS. TABARAK HUSSAIN, WHO TOLD CHARGE THAT SOME BENGALIEE FAMILY MEMBERS HAD ORIGINALLY GONE WITH HUSBANDS ON NIGHT OF MAY 5-6 BECAUSE IN THE CONFUSION THEY THOUGHT THEY WERE REQUIRED TO ACCOMPANY THEM. WHEN THEY LEARNED LATER THAT NIGHT THAT THEY WERE NOT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 ISLAMA 03855 01 OF 02 110728 Z

ALSO TO BE DETAINED, MOST FAMILIES DECIDED REMAIN IN ISLAMABAD. MRS. HUSSAIN KNEW OF ONLY ONE WIFE WHO HAD ACCOMPANIED HUSBAND TO WARSACK ALTHOUGH SEVERAL FAMILIES, INCLUDING MRS. HUSSAIN HERSELF, INTENDED JOIN HUSBANDS THERE WHEN CHILDRENS SCHOOL WAS OUT. SHE NOTED THAT BY MAY 9 SHE HAD ALREADY RECEIVED MESSAGES FROM HER HUSBAND AT WARSACK SAYING THAT HE WAS IN

COMFORTABLE, REASONABLY SPACIOUS QUARTERS AND ASKING THAT SHE SEND HIM FAN AND AIR CONDITIONER. GOP HAD INFORMED SHE WOULD BE FREE TO VISIT HUSBAND AT ANY TIME, SHE SAID, AND SHE INTENDED TEST THIS AFTER FEW DAYS.

4. BOTH SHAIKH AND NAWAZ INDICATED THAT GOP WOULD CONTINUE PAYING ALLOWANCES TO CIVIL SERVICE DETAINEES, WITHOUT WHICH THEIR FAMILIES WOULD IN SOME CASES PROBABLY BE DESTITUTE.

5. IN ISLAMABAD, GOP HAS NOT ATTEMPTED TO INTERFERE WITH AMERICAN AND OTHER DIPLOMATS WHO HAVE VISITED FAMILIES OF BENGALLEES SINCE ROUNDUP NOR HAVE FAMILY MEMBERS BEEN RESTRICTED TO QUARTERS. HOWEVER, CONGEN KARACHI REPORTS THAT ATTEMPTS BY OTHER BENGALLEES TO VISIT DETAINEES IN LANDHI AND TAKE THEM CLOTHING AND CIGARETTES WERE REBUFFED MAY 7. CONGEN FURTHER REPORTS THAT PHYSICAL SECURITY OR MILITARY DETAINEES IN AREA WAS RECENTLY TIGHTENED. BENGALLEE NAVAL OFFICERS, WHO WERE FORMERLY ALLOWED FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT AND VISITORS, HAVE BEEN RESTRICTED, AND SENTRIES POSTED AT THEIR

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PAGE 01 ISLAMA 03855 02 OF 02 110837 Z

11
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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 2 OF 2 ISLAMABAD 3855

RESIDENCES NOW REQUIRE VISITORS TO PRODUCE SPECIAL AUTHORIZATION FROM STATION COMMANDER. CONGEN CONFIRMS THAT NINE DOCTORS WERE PICKED UP IN KARACHI ROUNDUP, INCLUDING ORGANIZER AND OTHER PHYSICIANS ACTIVE IN KARACHI BENGALIEE FREE MEDICAL SCHEME, AND ADDS THAT 14 FORMER OFFICIALS PICKED UP MAY 5-6 WERE SUBSEQUENTLY RELEASED.

6. DISCUSSING GOP MOTIVES IN DETAINING BENGALIEES, SHAIKH REITERATED TO CHARGE MAY 9 THAT SOME 15,000 BENGALIEES HAD ESCAPED COUNTRY IN PAST YEAR AND ADDED THAT NO FEWER THAN 32 HIGH-RANKING FORMER OFFICIALS HAD FLED IN TEN DAYS PRIOR TO ROUNDUP. ESCAPEES, HE POINTED OUT, HAD VIOLATED LAW BY DEPARTING COUNTRY WITHOUT PERMISSION. HE CLAIMED THAT BASIC RATIONALE FOR DETAINING BENGALIEES WAS GOP DESIRE TO INSURE THEIR SAFETY IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 ISLAMA 03855 02 OF 02 110837 Z

ANTICIPATION OF STRONGLY ADVERSE POPULAR REACTION TO EXPECTED WAR CRIMES TRIALS IN BANGLADESH. IN RESPONSE CHARGE'S QUESTION, HOWEVER, HE THEN ACKNOWLEDGED THAT DETENTION COULD ALSO RELATE TO POSSIBLE GOP TRIALS OF FORMER BENGALIEE OFFICIALS IN RETALIATION FOR BANGLADESH WAR CRIMES TRIALS.

7. USIAD DEPUTY DIRECTOR QUIZZED NAWAZ MAY 9 ABOUT BENGALIEES AND WAS TOLD THAT OF ORIGINAL ESTIMATED 17,500 (SIC) BENGALIEE CIVIL SERVANTS IN PAKISTAN, OF WHOM 5,000 WERE CLASS I OFFICERS, ALL BUT ABOUT 200 CLASS I OFFICERS HAD ESCAPED FROM COUNTRY. ATTEMPTING TO EXPLAIN RATIONALE FOR ROUNDUP, NAWAZ NOTED THAT GROUP OF WIVES OF PAKISTANI POW'S HAD RECENTLY VISITED HIS OFFICE AND HAD CRITICIZED GOP IN "FEROCIOUS" MANNER FOR HAVING FAILED OBTAIN RETURN OF POW'S AND FOR HAVING "ALLOWED" BDG TO ORGANIZE WAR CRIMES TRIALS. NAWAZ INDICATED THAT GOP DID NOT INTEND RELEASE DETAINED BENGALIEES UNTIL POW'S WERE RETURNED.

8. ICRC DEPUTY CHIEF DELEGATE ISLER INFORMED EMBOFF THAT NAWAZ HAD TOLD HIM THERE WERE AT PRESENT 13 HIGH-RANKING BENGALIEES AT WARSACK, 105 OF LESSER RANK AT QADIRABAD AND 126 AT LANDHI. (APPARENT DISCREPANCY BETWEEN THESE FIGURES AND NUMBERS CITED ON OTHER OCCASIONS BY NAWAZ AND SHAIKH NOT EXPLAINED.) ISLER SAID NAWAZ HAD WONDERED ALOUD WHY ICRC AND NUMBER OF DIPLOMATS, "ESPECIALLY OUR FRIENDS THE AMERICANS," WERE SO CONCERNED AT ROUNDUP OF BENGALIEES. HE POINTED OUT THAT BENGALIEES WERE BEING WELL TREATED AND INDEED HAD BEEN

PUT INTO MORE SECURE QUARTERS " FOR THEIR OWN SAFETY."
HE THEN INDICATED HE UNDERSTOOD WHY DIPLOMATS WERE
TRYING TO ASCERTAIN FACTS, AND SAID HE HOPED THEY WOULD
SOON DEVELOP CLEAR PICTURE OF SITUATION AND GIVE
SYMPATHETIC REPORTS TO THEIR GOVERNMENTS.

9. ON MAY 10, BOTH ISLER AND SWISS FIRST SECRETARY
DENIED STORIES IN LOCAL PRESS REPORTING THAT ICRC
AND SWISS HAD BEEN ASKED BY GOI TO INVESTIGATE WELFARE
OF " ROUNDED- UP" BENGALIEES. BOTH MEN NOTED THAT BENGALIEES
WERE " NONE OF INDIA' S BUSINESS," AND ADDED THAT
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PAGE 03 ISLAMA 03855 02 OF 02 110837 Z

TO BEST THEIR KNOWLEDGE, NO REQUEST HAD YET COME FROM
BDG EITHER.
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